IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend the Specification as follows:

Please replace page 3 of the specification with the page attached hereto. Both a clean version of the amended page, as well as a marked up version are submitted herewith as per 37 CFR 1.125.

acids in the peptide linker is selected from the group consisting of (Gly, Ser, Asn, Thr and Ala; the peptide linker includes a Gly-Ser element.

In a preferred embodiment, the fusion protein includes a peptide linker and the peptide linker includes a sequence having the formula (Ser-Gly-G1y-G1y-G1y)y (SEQ. ID 1) wherein y is 1, 2,3, 4, 5, 6,7, or 8. Preferably, the peptide linker includes a sequence having the formula $(Ser\text{-}Gly\text{-}Gly\text{-}Gly\text{-}Gly)_3$ (SEQ. ID 1). Preferably, the peptide linker includes a sequence having the formula ((Ser-Gly-Gly-Gly-Gly_4-Ser-Pro) (SEQ. ID 3).

In a preferred embodiment, the fusion protein includes a peptide linker and the peptide linker includes a sequence having the formula (Ser-Ser-Ser-Ser-Gly)y (SEQ. ID 5 [[4]]) wherein y is 1,2, 3, 4, 5,6, 7, or 8. Preferably, the peptide linker includes a sequence having the formula $((Ser\text{-}Ser\text{-}Ser\text{-}Ser\text{-}Gly)_3$-Ser-Pro) (SEQ. ID 4).

In another aspect, the invention features, an EPOa-hSA fusion protein wherein the EPOa includes amino acid residues G1n24, G1n38, G1n83 and A1a126.

In a preferred embodiment the EPOa is G1n24, G[[0]]1n38, Gln83, A1a126 EPO (i.e., only amino acids 24, 38, 83, and 126 differ from wild type).

In another aspect, the invention features, an EPOa-hSA fusion protein which includes from left to right, an EPOa which includes amino acid residues G1n24, Gln38, G1n83 and Ala126, a peptide linker, e.g., a peptide linker having the formula ((Ser-Gly-Gly-GIy-Gly)$_4$-Ser-Pro) (SEQ. ID 3), and human serum albumin.

In a preferred embodiment the EPOa is G1n24, G1n38, G1n83, A1a126 EPO.

In a preferred embodiment the fusion protein is from left to right, G1n24, G1n38, Gln83, Ala126 EPO, a peptide linker having the formula ((Ser-Gly-Gly-Gly-Gly)$_4$-Ser-Pro) (SEQ. ID 3), and human serum albumin.

In another aspect, the invention features, an EPOa-hSA fusion protein which includes, from left to right, human serum albumin, a peptide linker, e.g., a peptide linker having the formula ((Ser-Gly-Gly-Gly-Gly)$_{34}$-Ser-Pro) (SEQ. ID 3), and an EPOa which includes amino acid residues G1n24, G1n38, G1n83 and Ala126.

In a preferred embodiment the EPOa is G1n24, G1n38, Gln83, Ala126 EPO.

In a preferred embodiment the fusion protein is from left to right, human serum albumin, a peptide linker having the formula ((Ser-Gly-G1y-GIy-Gly)$_4$-Ser-Pro) (SEQ. ID 3), and Gln24, Gln38, G1n83, A1a126 EPO.